

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in this application, with claim 1 amended herein.

In the office action, claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,888,837 to Cunningham in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,016,980 to Mayer.

Independent claim 1 has been amended herein to recite:

“a domain definition module for defining a domain configured by said one or more networks, said domain definition module storing an interface identifier for identifying an interface module- in association with a domain identifier for identifying said domain, wherein a set of one or more networks each connected to interface modules identified by one or more interface identifiers corresponding to said domain identifier is defined as said domain;”

Support for this amendment can be found in Fig.1 of the application; further Fig.6 illustrates a table defining the association of “an interface identifier” and “a domain identifier.”

As recited in Claim 1, as amended, the domain of claim 1 is defined as a set of one or more networks each connected to interface modules identified by one or more interface identifiers corresponding to said domain identifier. Claim 1 also recites an inter-domain communication definition module for which defines connectability between said two or more domains defined by said domain definition module (See Fig. 7). Then, connectability is defined based on a combination of the following parameters: a source/destination domain identifier, an inter-domain communicability field, and a translation rule, where the connectability is judged without depending on IP address, thus judging of the connectability is not affected even if any of IP addresses assigned to terminals communicating between the domains are changed. Further, judging is done correctly even if two different domains include terminals using same IP address.

In contrast, the relied upon portions of Mayer (US 7,016, 980) do not disclose the domain as recited in Claim 1. The office action alleges that the judging of the relay control unit of Claim 1 (“relay control unit judging whether ...”) is disclosed in Mayer at col. 5 lines 17-38, where “source and destination host-groups” is used to determine whether allowed services are permitted only between subsets of the specified source and destination host-groups.

However, it is respectfully submitted that this interpretation of Mayer is in error. As shown in Mayer at column 5 lines 17-38 and column 8, lines 10-44, the host-group is just a set of IP addresses. Thus the communication between host-groups is judged based on IP addresses which belong to the host-groups. Then according to Mayer, the result of judging the connectability is affected when any of IP addresses assigned to terminals communicating between the host-groups is changed. Further, whether the communication between host-groups is judged based on IP addresses which belong to the host-groups, thus, judging is not done correctly if two different domains include terminals using same IP address.

For example, in an instance where a relay apparatus supports VPN, each of user groups corresponds to the domain of Claim 1 and the host-group of Mayer. Generally, each user group of VPN assigns IP addresses to their terminals independently from other user groups. It often occurs that plural user groups use same IP addresses. In such case, the communication data relay system of Claim 1 can judge correctly, however, the system disclosed in Mayer cannot function correctly at all.

Further, Cunningham discloses only a method of transformation between a local address and a global address. Cunningham does not disclose a domain definition module and an inter-domain communication definition module of Claim 1.

Thus it is submitted that whether used singularly or in combination Mayer and Cunningham do not, teach each and every limitation of the independent claim 1. Accordingly, independent Claim 1 distinguishes over Mayer in view of Cunningham and is allowable. Claims 2-3 that depend from Claim 1 are allowable therewith.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

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